

REMARKS

I. Amendment After Allowance

The present application has been allowed, as indicated in a Notice of Allowance and Issue Fee Due mailed on February 9, 2004. Entry of this amendment under 37 CFR §1.312 is hereby requested. This amendment merely corrects formal matters in the specification and drawings, and does not change the scope of the claims. See e.g., M.P.E.P. §714.16.

In reviewing this application prior to allowance, Applicants noted that the priority claim already acknowledged by the Patent Office in the Corrected Filing Receipt mailed on October 3, 2000 does not appear in the application text. Therefore, via the above-listed amendment to page 1 of the specification, the priority claim to U.S. provisional application serial no. 60/127,816 noted in the Corrected Filing Receipt has been added to the application text.

If the Examiner has any questions concerning the above-listed amendment, he is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the number listed below.

II. Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance

The Notice of Allowance and Issue Fee Due includes an Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance that paraphrases portions of independent claim 21, which is allowed in the present application. Applicants would like to make some clarifications for the record with respect to the allowed claims.

While Applicants agree that the claims distinguish over the prior art of record, Applicants would like to emphasize for the record that the Statement of Reasons for Allowance does not address or accurately paraphrase independent claim 25, which is also allowed in the present application. In fact, the limitations that appear in the Statement of Reasons for Allowance do not appear anywhere in claim 25. Applicants would like to make clear for the record that claim 25 distinguishes over the prior art based solely on the language recited in the claim.

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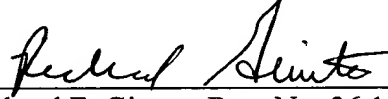
If there are any questions concerning the foregoing, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the number listed below.

Conclusion

If there are questions regarding this Amendment, please telephone Applicants' undersigned attorney.

If there is a fee occasioned by this amendment, including an extension fee, that is not covered by an enclosed check, please charge any deficiency to Deposit Account No. 23/2825.

Respectfully submitted,
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